



*1st Session  
108th Congress*

CONGRESSMAN

**SAM FARR**

# Reports

TO THE CENTRAL COAST

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## Dear Friends:

The new 108<sup>th</sup> Congress is strongly divided. Big issues have dominated the first half of this year's session: war and peace, taxes and social programs, terrorism and civil liberties. It has not been easy in Washington, D.C. or California.

Our wonderfully diverse district, situated on the stunning Central Coast, leads the nation in so many areas:

- ✍ Largest Federal marine sanctuary
- ✍ First master's degree in Homeland Security at the Naval Postgraduate School
- ✍ Largest foreign language school (Defense Language Institute)
- ✍ Most crops grown (more than 85)
- ✍ Largest crop number of certified organic agriculture

But even with the best and the brightest, our region has been hit – like every other – with California's record revenue shortfalls, which have resulted in massive cuts that have kept the state budget from being adopted on time. Local governments are having to close or cut back on delivery of services – including hospitals, schools and health care facilities.

Of course, the economy is not the only thing on our minds. We are also concerned about the lives of our soldiers sent overseas to fight in Iraq. As many of you know, I opposed the war. I thought that we needed more time to build an international coalition against Saddam Hussein, and that Iraq did not pose an immediate threat to our national security. Nevertheless, now that our soldiers are over there, I wish them all the success in their mission, and a safe and speedy return home. As we see now, the Administration was not entirely straightforward with the American people about the threat posed by Iraq, and the challenges our military would face after the war. It is my fervent hope we discover the truth about the Administration's intelligence on Iraq soon and then move on quickly to the important task of rebuilding Iraq and maintaining peace and security in a region plagued by conflict.

There have been other troubling issues confronting us here in Washington. I have been presented with some difficult legislation, much of which I have had to vote against, including:

- ✍ Oil dependent energy policy
- ✍ Federal tax cuts
- ✍ Drug company authored "prescription drug benefits" and HMO authored "Medicare plans"
- ✍ Underfunding Homeland Security
- ✍ Funding cuts to the No Child Left Behind Act and IDEA

I will continue to work hard to make the federal government more responsive to your needs. My job is to make sure all the proper money is appropriated, laws written and amended to better serve the public.

I encourage you to write me with your concerns or attend one of my upcoming Town Hall Meetings and make your voice heard.

Sincerely,

SAMFARR  
Member of Congress

## YOUR VOICE CAN BE HEARD! TOWN HALL MEETINGS IN AUGUST

### GONZALES

Wednesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 – 8:30 pm  
Gonzales City Hall Chambers  
117 Fourth Street  
Gonzales, CA 93926  
For directions to the site, call: 675-5000

### SANTA CRUZ

Friday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 – 8:30 pm  
Santa Cruz City Hall – Council Chambers  
809 Center Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
For directions to the site, call: 420-5030

### HOLLISTER

Tuesday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 – 8:00 pm  
San Benito County Chambers  
481 Fourth Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
For directions to the site, call: 636-4000

### SALINAS

Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 6:30 – 8:30 pm  
Salinas City Council Rotunda  
200 Lincoln Avenue  
Salinas, CA 93901  
For directions to the site, call: 758-7381

### SEASIDE

Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 – 8:30 pm  
Seaside City Council Chambers  
440 Harcourt Avenue  
Seaside, CA 93955  
For directions to the site, call: 899-6200

### WATSONVILLE

Wednesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 – 9:30 pm  
Watsonville City Hall Chambers  
250 Main Street  
Watsonville, CA 95077  
For directions to the site, call: 728-6005

# SAVING OUR OCEANS

**“It is our responsibility to be stewards of our great oceans and coast and allow our children to enjoy the sea the same way we have.” -Congressman Sam Farr**

Our oceans are dying. That's the wake-up call being heard around the nation. Fisheries are less plentiful than ever, our waters are polluted, invasive species are destroying marine ecosystems, and things are just getting worse. Even the pristine waters of Monterey Bay are not immune.

In 1998, after the first Presidential Oceans Conference was held in Monterey Bay, Congressman Farr authored legislation creating the first U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy. Their mission is quite broad, incorporating:

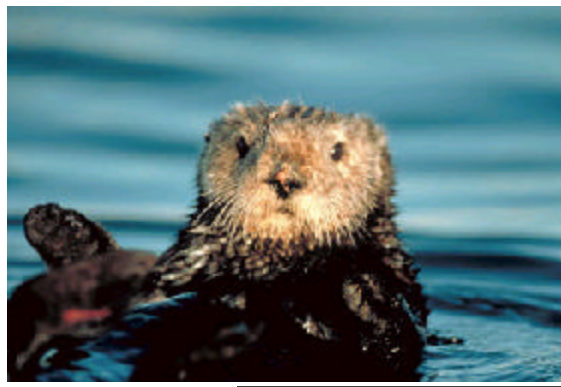
- ✍ Maritime commerce and transportation
- ✍ Marine pollution
- ✍ Living marine resources
- ✍ Ocean sciences and education
- ✍ Recommendations to improving our federal laws

Congress is due to receive their comprehensive report on the state of our oceans later this year.

In June, Congress - and the

damental changes to the way we manage our living marine resources.

What will Congress and the nation do once the Commissions offer their recommendations? “As co-chair of the House Oceans Caucus, I will be working with my bi-partisan colleagues to create legislation fixing our national marine policies where they are broken,” said Congressman Farr. “We aim to incorporate policies which create respect for the marine conservation ethic yet provide for a variety of uses of marine resources. A great example of this balance can be found at



**The sea otter is just one of the many species threatened by ocean pollution.**

nation - received the privately funded Pew Oceans Commission Report, titled *America's Living Oceans*, which told us our oceans are in crisis. The report recommended fun-

our very own Monterey Bay, a multiple use marine environment, balancing research, tourism, fishing and more.”

## PRESERVING THE ORGANIC STANDARD

**“Certified organic farming was born in Santa Cruz County and California is a leader in organic farming and livestock cultivation.” -Congressman Sam Farr**



*Courtesy: Merrilee Buchanan, CASFS Farm*

**There are organic farms all over the 17th District**

The National Organic Standard was finalized last October. Organics is booming: as an agricultural sector, it has grown 20% each year over the last ten years and has become an \$11 billion industry. Much of the growing of organic fruits and vegetables happens in the 17<sup>th</sup> District of California.

The organic industry came under attack this year by a back room rider to the annual 2003 Appropriations bill which would have had the effect of allowing organic farmers to use conventional

feedstock to cultivate “organic” livestock by stating that no money could be used to enforce the organic feed requirement for livestock.

Working with his colleagues, Congressman Farr succeeded in overriding the language and, in doing so, brought national attention once

again to this growing industry. “Our action in Congress restored the integrity to the Organic Label,” said Congressman Farr. “Now, with this language repealed, our farmers can be assured that the consumer knows what they’re getting.”

In 1990, Congressman Farr authored the first statewide organic standard in California; the federal standard was based on that legislation.

Congressman Farr now chairs a new Congressional Organic Caucus that will give Members ways of enhancing the standards to make them workable for producers and consumers.

### Did you know...

- ✍ Here in the 17th District, we're #1 in organic lettuce.
- ✍ We also produce organic strawberries, peaches, melons, artichokes and more.
- ✍ Santa Cruz County produces \$18.3 million gross sales of organic produce on 2,913 acres
- ✍ Monterey County produces \$27.6 million gross sales of organic produce on 9,051 acres

# PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN

**“Immigrants are a vital part of the Central Coast community – our agriculture and travel and tourism industries depend on their contributions. I support a fair and just system to regulate the legal entry of immigrants into the United States and their inclusion into American society and economy. That’s why I authored the law which enabled local swearing-in services.” -Congressman Sam Farr**

✍ This year, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has a new name and a new mission. It’s now the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) and it will focus solely on managing legal immigration.

✍ Congressman Farr convened a taskforce of local immigration service providers, known as the Central Coast Immigration Task Force. They have been targeting fraudulent practices by some immigration consultants and working with the new BCIS to improve services.

✍ Congressman Farr’s office is here for you. “My office hears stories daily of lost files, abusive service, indifference, or arbitrary decisions,” he said. “What we try to do is make the process a work smoother.”

✍ Questions? Call one of the district offices, listed on the back of this mailing.



150 new citizens took the Oath of Citizenship at the 8th Annual Proud to be an American Ceremony, July 2nd, 2003

Source: 2000 Census Report

## SERVING OUR NATION WITH PRIDE

### Congressman Farr’s Veteran Priorities:

**Concurrent receipt.** Presently, disabled veterans have their retirement benefits reduced by the amount of their disability compensation. Receiving them together, without deduction, is known as “concurrent receipt.” Congressman Farr supports legislation that will provide all combat veterans with disabilities with both checks.

**Salute to Veterans and the Armed Forces Act of 2003.** Congressman Farr co-sponsored this comprehensive bill in the House (HR 2569) which would:

- ✍ Authorize concurrent receipt
- ✍ Allow surviving spouses to receive both Dependency and Indemnity Compensation and military retirement benefits
- ✍ Increase education benefits for members of the Selected Reserve under the Montgomery G.I. Bill
- ✍ Help VA meet its standards by providing \$1 billion per year over the next ten years in increased funding
- ✍ Overturn the Administration’s proposal to increase prescription co-payments and authority to charge enrollment fees.

### Creating a veterans’ cemetery at the former Ft. Ord.

Congressman Farr is committed to establishing the cemetery; however, the need for the State to provide the annual funds for a cemetery’s maintenance presents a very high hurdle because of the State’s continuing budget crisis.

**There are several facilities established throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> District to assist our vets. You should also feel free to contact my office.**

**Capitola Veterans Center**  
1350 41st Avenue, 102  
Capitola, CA 95010  
(831) 464-551941  
This is a VA center for  
**combat** vets only

**Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic at Ft. Ord**  
3401 Engineer Lane  
Seaside, CA 93955  
(831) 883-3800  
Full outpatient clinic, run  
by the VA for all veterans  
receiving VA healthcare

**Santa Cruz County Veterans Service Office**  
842 Front St.  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(831) 458-7110  
**Satellite facility:**  
215 East Beach Street  
Watsonville, CA 95076  
(831) 763-4419  
For all veterans, run by  
Santa Cruz County.

**Monterey County Military and Veterans Affairs Office**  
265 Reservation Road  
Marina, CA 93933  
(831) 384-0606  
For all veterans, run by  
Monterey and San Benito  
Counties.

### Did you know....

There are 46,631 veterans living in the 17th District. That’s 7.3% of our citizens!

Source: 2000 Census Report

# AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ALL

By Congressman Sam Farr

The Central Coast is a region with an affordable housing shortage. We are all aware of the high cost of houses in the area; just open up any newspaper and read the home listings. By one measure, the National Association of Home Builders Housing Opportunity Index (last updated 2002), the Salinas area and Santa Cruz-Watsonville are ranked one and two respectively as the least affordable places to live in the country, with about eight percent of housing being affordable. With workers having to drive longer distances to get to work, our economy – which is dependent on getting tourists in and agriculture out – is impacted. We have to do something, and we have to do it now.

The land provided by the closure of Ft. Ord has provided us a unique opportunity. Think about it – more than 6,000 homes can be built on the land. With its wide-open expanses, Ft. Ord presents one of the last major opportunities for housing development along the California coast. Such a valuable resource should be carefully planned to benefit the greatest number of people in our district.

I have been working with the Ft. Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) to lock in higher numbers of units at affordable prices (\$300,000 and less) and to limit the availability of those units to the local workforce. I have asked for at least 50 percent of that housing to be affordable; so far, FORA has not acted on that proposal.

Every community needs to have a workforce housing plan that includes opportunities for moderate, low and very low income citizens. Ft. Ord is the largest piece of land ever transferred for free from the federal to the local government. The community leadership can now choose to solve our housing needs with mixed income housing - or assure the building of new mansions. Which will it be?

## FARR PROPOSALS: FT. ORD

*Note: Only voting members of the Ft. Ord Reuse Authority (local mayors and Monterey County Supervisors) can adopt housing requirements.*

- ? **Below market housing.** Should be available at Fort Ord and meet the following goals:
  - o workforce housing – up to 30 percent (housing for moderate income families)
  - o affordable housing – up to 20 percent (housing for low- and very low income families)
- ? **Preference for local buyers and renters.** Persons currently living or working in Monterey County would have first options at Fort Ord housing.
- ? **Maintain the affordability of the homes.** This means that when the house is re-sold or re-rented, it cannot be re-sold or re-rented for extraordinary gains or at speculative prices – it must be resold at a price consistent within the affordable or workforce parameters. This could be accomplished through a land trust or other legal mechanism.
- ? **“One-stop” qualifying process for buyers.** This means creating a clearance process (possibly through the county housing authority or one of the local housing non-profit groups) that would objectively screen buyers and renters and determine their eligibility to purchase or rent Fort Ord housing.

## FARR PROPOSAL, ALL COMMUNITIES:

- ? **Create a countywide housing trust** that would provide financial assistance to first time homebuyers.

### Did you know....

Average home cost in Monterey County: \$428,750  
Average home cost in Santa Cruz County: \$541,000

*Source: Five County Multiple Listings*

## HOW TO REACH CONGRESSMAN SAM FARR

SANTA CRUZ  
701 Ocean Street, Room 318  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(831) 429-1976

SALINAS  
100 W. Alisal Street  
Salinas, CA 95060  
(831) 424-2229  
or call TOLL-FREE at  
1-800-340-FARR(3277)

WASHINGTON, D.C.  
1221 Longworth H.O.B.  
Washington, D.C. 20515-0517  
(202) 225-2861

EMAIL: [samfarr@mail.house.gov](mailto:samfarr@mail.house.gov) --- WEBSITE: <http://www.house.gov/farr>  
LOOK OUT FOR OUR NEW AND IMPROVED WEBSITE, COMING IN SEPTEMBER!